



# Elevating and Mobilizing Voices from Across New York to Advocate for an Equitable 2023 Farm Bill

May 25, 2023

*Co-sponsored by [New York Health Foundation](#), [Merck Family Fund](#), [Philanthropy New York](#), [Engage New York](#), and [Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders](#)*

[Event link](#)

## **Agenda**

### **Welcome**

- Adam Liebowitz, [Community Food Funders](#)
- Bronwyn Starr, [New York Health Foundation](#)

### **Framing**

- Leah Eden, [Equity Advocates](#)

### **Campaign Background & Policy Proposals**

- Iyeshima Harris-Ouedraogo, [Equity Advocates](#)
- Khadhazha Welch, [Equity Advocates](#)
- Rebekah Williams, [Food for the Spirit](#)

### **Panel Discussion**

### **Open Q&A**

## Speaker Bios



**Bronwyn Starr**, Senior Program Officer, helps lead NYHealth's Healthy Food, Healthy Lives priority area, with a goal to create a more equitable food system that connects all New Yorkers with the food they need to thrive. Prior to Healthy Food, Healthy Lives, Ms. Starr managed the Foundation's Building Healthy Communities priority area, supporting residents, community-based organizations, and government agencies to improve neighborhood health. Prior to joining NYHealth, Ms. Starr led a program at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene that helped primary care providers improve medication adherence for their patients



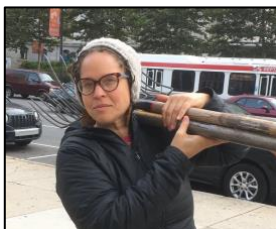
**Leah Kabran Eden** is the Executive Director of Equity Advocates. Leah has always had a passion for social justice and uses her decade of experience as an organizer and policy analyst in New York to advance policy and systems change within the food system as a key mechanism to address the underlying causes of poverty and inequality. Prior to co-founding Equity Advocates in 2019 she served as Policy Specialist at the United Way of New York City, leading a strategic planning process to build policy efforts around food security, asset building, and educational equity.



**Iyeshima Harris-Ouedraogo** started her mark in the food justice movement over 10 years ago. As a Jamaican native, she struggled with the process of assimilation into a new culture. Through farming she found great comfort in her community. Throughout her involvement in the food justice movement, Iyeshima has taught food justice, advocated for universal free school lunch as part of Community Food Advocates' Youth Food Policy Council, as well as designed and facilitated youth-led programs. These exposures ignited Iyeshima to further her dedication to integrating youth empowerment and leadership into adult dominated sectors. As Equity Advocates' Policy Manager, she is responsible for implementing organizational policy goals and campaign strategies, leading government relations efforts, hosting advocacy and policy workshops to educate and engage food systems partners on policy issues and advocacy strategies, including EA's youth organizing



**Khadhazha Welch** is an accomplished research analyst, community organizer and entrepreneur. As Equity Advocates' Community Organizer, she is responsible for leading the New York City Food Policy Alliance, conducting outreach to expand membership and work with food systems partners to create and advance advocacy campaigns. Khadhazha's previous experience includes conducting community mapping outreach with the Kings County District Attorney's Office to build relationships with Brooklyn community organizations and identify community needs as well as interning for the former Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer.



**Rebekah Williams** is an organizer and trainer from Western New York and co-founder of Food for the Spirit and the Buffalo Food Equity Network. With over twenty years working in nonprofits, Rebekah has experience encouraging youth leadership, social and racial justice, environmentalism, and the arts. As Food for the Spirit's Co-Founding Director, Rebekah is actively engaged in supporting the development of a

cooperative enterprise for Black farmers in NYS, she is supporting the development of the Genesee Valley Black Farmers Collective, and she is participating in Race Forward's Policy Innovation Lab. Rebekah is a board member of the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group and a steering committee member for Black Farmers United NYS. She has a degree in Social Structure, Theory and Change from SUNY Empire State College; and has completed training with the Buffalo Montessori Teacher Education Program, Center for Economic Democracy in Boston MA, HEAL Food Alliance and Movement Generation in Oakland CA, and Training for Change in Philadelphia PA.